Remark

By this amendment, claims 1, 12, 13, and 18 have been amended, No Claims have been added. Therefore, claims 1-20 are presented for examination. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been introduced by this amendment.

Conclusion

If the Examiner finds any remaining impediment to the prompt allowance of these claims that could be clarified with a telephone conference, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at (303) 740-1980.

Charge our Deposit Account

Please charge any shortage to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

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MARKED VERSION

Presented below are the claims, as amended, showing additions in underlined text and deletions in brackets.

In the Specification:

On page 1, please replace the second full paragraph with the following:

The invention relates generally to the field of online commerce. More particularly, the invention relates to rating systems and user feedback mechanisms for use in electronic environments, e.g., online trading environment, online shopping site, online auctioning site, online person-to-person trading site, online gaming site or other electronic environment [were] where user feedback is provided, including those within an Internet market place community.

On page 9, please replace the second full paragraph with the following:

The various exemplary community ratings 231-237 respectively for users 121-127 are presented in FIG. 2. As previously mentioned, the invention provides for various methodologies to determine a community rating for an individual user by manipulating such factors as the feedback ratings, other data elements, and/or the relationships among the users of the electronic community. The methodology represented by the community ratings 231-237 is to aggregate the feedback rating 131-137 for the individual user with all the community ratings 231-237 of users brought into the electronic community by the individual user. In

other words, by representing the relationships among users as a tree structure, the community rating [131-137] 231-237 for a user is the aggregate of the feedback ratings of the user and all its [descendents] descendants. In this manner, the community rating 232 of p2p 122 is its feedback rating 132; the community rating 233 for carter 123 is the sum of the feedback ratings [131-33] 131-133 for users coin-nut 121, p2p 122 and carter 123; and the community rating 234 of astroyriod 124 is the sum of feedback ratings 131-137.

On page 13, please replace the second full paragraph with the following:

In an embodiment, the community rater 420 is comprised of both a valuator 421 and an aggregator 422. The aggregator 422 performs a recursive routine, which aggregates the feedback ratings or characteristic values of all users in lineal succession to a patriarchal user for which a community rating is being determined. The valuator 421 combines (e.g. adds, determines a weighted average, etc). the patriarchal user's characteristic value with the aggregate value determined by the aggregator 422 to determine the patriarchal users community rating. Other embodiments of the invention are envisioned that use [another] other methods for determining the community rating that do not specifically utilize aggregator and valuator components or routines.

On page 16, please replace the first full paragraph with the following:

Figure 6B is a high level flow diagram illustrating a recursive routine that may be performed by an aggregator 422 to determine an aggregate value of all the feedback values of all lineal [descendents] descendants of the identified user.

The routine begins at step 650, and proceeds to step 655 where the community rating for the first child of the identified user is set to the first child's feedback rating. Next, in steps 660 & 665, the feedback values for all lineal [descendents] descendants of the first child are aggregated and the value returned is added to the first child's community rating. If the identified user had at least two children, the sibling field in the first child's related data structure will have a pointer to the second child. Accordingly, for each n+1th child of the identified user, the nth child will have a pointer in the sibling field to that child (where n is an integer of at least 1). In steps 670 & 675 an aggregate community value for all children other than the first child of the identified user (who are all siblings of the first child) is determined and this value is added to the community rating of the first child. Finally, the aggregate value of the community rating for all the children is returned to the valuator in step 680 to be added with the feedback rating of the identified user to determine the identified user's community rating as discussed supra.

In The Claims:

1   1.   (Amended) A computerized method for determining a community rating for

2   a particular user of a plurality of users within an electronic community

3   comprising:

4   maintaining a characteristic value for [a] each of the plurality of

5   users;

6   maintaining a set of relationships between the plurality of users;

7   and

8		deriving a community rating for the particular user by performing a
9		function on the characteristic values of the users of the plurality of users
10		related to the particular user.
1	12.	(Amended) The method of claim 11, wherein the community rating is an
2		aggregate of the characteristic value for each user of the plurality of users
3		that is a lineal [descendent] descendant of the particular user and the
4		characteristic value of the particular user.
1	13.	(Amended) A method comprising:
2		maintaining reputation value on each user of a plurality of users
3		within an electronic trading community through which goods and services
4		are bought and sold, the reputation value being derived for a particular
5		user of the plurality of users from feedback received concerning the
6		particular user from other users of the plurality of users;
7		maintaining a set of relationships between the plurality of users, the
8		set of relationships including sponsorship relationships between the
9		particular user and any users of the plurality of users that were sponsored
10		by the particular user, where the set of relationships for a particular user
11		can be represented as an n-ary [trees] tree;
12		deriving a community rating for the particular user by aggregating
13		the reputation value for each user of the plurality of users that is related to
14		the particular user through a linear sponsorship succession as can be
15		represented by the n-ary tree in which the particular user is the root of the
16		n-ary tree.

1 18.   (Amended) The computer-readable medium of claim 17, wherein the

2   community rating and the characteristic values are numerical, and the

3   community rating is an aggregate of the characteristic value for each user

4   of the plurality of users that is a lineal [descendent] <u>descendant</u> of the

5   particular user and the characteristic value of the particular user derived

6   using a recursive routine.